ARLY VICTORIAN
ND OTHER PAPERS

E. S. P. HAYNES

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BY

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Dedicated

TO

H. BELLOC, Esq., M.P.

PREFACE

My dedication of this little volume to my friend, Mr. H. Belloc, seems to me particularly appropriate because he is a Liberal and a Catholic, and in these capacities poignantly appeals to the innate Toryism which is part of my heritage as an Englishman. I once asked a great-uncle of mine if church services had not improved since the days of his infancy, and he only remarked in feeling tones, "Give me back my old barn with the barrel-organ inside it." He was not, as might be surmised, an Evangelical, but a sceptic, who yet yearned to resuscitate the things of his childhood. Most Englishmen share the same instinct. It is either the past or the future that possesses a glamour for men and women. It is the past that appeals to me and the future that appals me, and if anyone considers my attitude unreasonable let him spend a few weeks in Chicago.

These little papers centre round the almost intimate affection one feels, not for the past that

is already dead, but for the past that is in process of dying, for the old things that are broken up and distributed when the parental home ceases to exist, or that one tumbles upon in the course of winding-up the estate of an ancient spinster lady.

That my ancestors would have long tolerated my society or have approved of my remarks on many topics I scarcely venture to suppose, but they would probably have been pleased at my thinking them on the whole braver and honester and more full of character than the type of person who flourishes nowadays. And Mr. Belloc, essentially *laudator temporis acti*, no doubt agrees with me, for it is in his writings that I discern more clearly than elsewhere the appreciation of the simple, honest, and kindly folk of the Early and Middle Victorian period. Perhaps also he will pardon me for explaining that Liberalism appeals to all my Tory instincts because it still conserves the jolly old dreams of the sixties when everyone was, or was about to be, good and great and free, and because his party has seldom been allowed by the electorate to reform any abuse of less than fifty years' standing. For such is the Toryism of this country that only those who profess and call themselves Tories are allowed to introduce modern reforms at short notice, while professed

Liberals are compelled to fall back upon the mature wisdom that distinguishes thinkers of such respectable antiquity as Rousseau and Cobden, not to mention Dr. Watts and Mr. Martin Tupper.

But I must not be drawn into political disputations, and, in conclusion, can only request the indulgence of the reader and reviewer to the trivialities which have amused me on Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings. My thanks are due to Mr. Reginald Smith, K.C., for permission to reprint "Lady Hamilton and Horatia" and "Oxford and Cambridge, a Study in Types," from the *Cornhill*, to the editor of the *Morning Post* in respect of "Le Bonheur de ce Monde," to Mr. C. R. Buxton in respect of "Early Victorian Characteristics," and to Mr. C. R. Buxton and Mr. Lane in respect of "A Romance of 1821" and "Old Humphrey's Walks in London." The first appeared in the *Independent Review*, and the other two in the *Albany Review*.

St. John's Wood,
August 1908.

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Early Victorian Characteristics

OLD men so often tell us of the decadence of the younger generation that it is perhaps sometimes legitimate for young men to express their frank opinion of their immediate predecessors, and in essaying this apparently invidious task, none can feel so well equipped as one who admires few qualities more than those of the early Victorian age, and who labours under the unpleasant conviction that this generation has probably lost in singleness of purpose whatever it has gained in enlightenment. Moreover, paradoxical as it may seem, the young may be better able to see certain characteristics in an age which has only just passed away simply because they are not personally concerned with it and possess some detachment of view.

The most salient feature in the early Victorian age—which one may perhaps roughly define as 1840 to 1865—is the emergence of the middle classes not only into a definite political consciousness and force, but also into a keenly intellectual

life. In other periods of history we do not seem to see this stage of development very clearly; we only see the consummation of it, *e.g.*, in the Italian city states of the Middle Ages and Renascence, the middle class is already highly educated before it attracts the attention of historians.

In this country, however, the middle class was, as a whole, in the eighteenth century, comparatively inarticulate. The landed gentry are often heard of, but the bulk of the professional and trading classes are, in theory, as negligible in the intellectual life of the nation as they are in the statute book. One tends to forget that all but a few very eminent writers of the eighteenth century were mere hangers-on of the aristocracy, and even a man like Johnson was probably regarded, outside his own particular circle, chiefly as a learned man who could be employed to write on behalf of the Tories. But the Reform Bill of 1832 made the middle classes a living force, and the industrial changes of that period gave them a chance of imposing their ideas on the community at large. The study of a career like that of Mr. Gladstone from start to finish corroborates this impression in a very concrete way.

The strain of the Napoleonic wars, the laxity and irresponsibility of the Court and upper class under George IV. and William IV., and contemporaneously the political upheavals and intellectual ferment of the Continent all, to some extent, explain the predominant characteristics of

the early Victorian age. The class that suddenly found itself in power was primarily inclined to be destructive, and had to clear away many relics of the old *régime* before it could advance to constructive measures. Hence there was a certain negativity in early Victorian Liberalism which later Liberalism has never quite lost. It was anti-clerical, anti-monarchical, and above all things, individualistic. It knew what it did not want much better than what it did want. It drew to itself rationalists, nonconformists, free traders, republicans, teetotallers, universal suffragists, and a whole host of philanthropists. Even up to 1880 Liberalism seems to have attracted the keenest intellects of the time, and was probably the most characteristic expression of early Victorian thought. Reading Mr. Bryce's 'Studies in Contemporary Biography' one is impressed by the unexpectedly large number of his eminent friends who were not only Liberals but also Home Rulers long before 1886.

As might be expected from its origins, the most marked characteristic of the period seems to have been a curious simplicity not only of thought, but also of character. It was a period of good hard "brickbat and bludgeon" controversy, of fixed ideas, of genial optimism and confidence in the possibilities of human nature, coupled with a devout belief in political panaceas such as self-governing democracy, small nationalities, "religion without theology," pure individualism, universal peace, an incessant "progress" in human affairs to "something better,"

and many more equally desirable though vague ideals, the advent of which seemed as imminent as did the millenium to the early Christians. The mere mention of names as various as Macaulay, Buckle, Mill, Spencer, Bright, Cobden, and Palmerston, gives one a vivid realisation of the intellectual atmosphere.

This vague idealism prevailed as much in religion as in politics. Though Hume had logically demolished much of the old fabric of belief in the textual inspiration of the Bible, Englishmen are practical, and the old creed was indeed not greatly shaken till Colenso called Scriptural arithmetic in question. The Oxford movement had also tended to vague beliefs, and seems now to be chiefly significant as showing a certain growth of historic imagination and æsthetic instinct for which the Napoleonic wars had left neither time nor money in the earlier decades of the century.

The Broad Church movement was, however, in its origin perhaps more typical of the period. The early Victorian was puzzled by the apparent subsidence of the old landmarks, and his mind was no less susceptible to the fallacies than to the truths of physical science. For him, therefore, any reconciliation of scientific propositions with cosmic verities was extremely difficult and he was disposed to shirk discussion altogether. The average early Victorian attitude to religion rather resembled the reserve of a family in alluding to the skeleton in the family cupboard. It could only be mentioned by implication.

"Dear George is picking up very nicely on the South Coast" is often a happy way of expressing the fact that "Dear George" is leading a placid but edifying existence in a Home for Inebriates. In a similar strain the early Victorian would say that his religion was "the religion of all sensible men."

The more educated classes seem to have relapsed into a vague theism which necessitated little more than a belief in a personal God and personal immortality, together with a willingness to accept the more important and plausible miracles and to acquiesce in the rest as being what Sir Leslie Stephen admirably calls "congenial incidents." Like Mr. Lecky, they were inclined to "believe that the radii of a circle have a tendency to be equal," though they did not wish "to push the spirit of geometry too far."

Even those who most strongly denounced the *formulæ* of the age were admired because they were in some way congenial to it. Thus Carlyle and Ruskin were admired as sturdy individualists even when their utterances were most unpalatable; for a fine, rude, irresponsible vigour in speech and action was essentially an early Victorian ideal, and an ideal like this was catholic enough to comprehend men as diverse as Palmerston, Carlyle and Garibaldi, though not perhaps a highly complex genius like that of Mr. Meredith.

I have alluded before to the simplicity of early Victorian thought; it found its complement in a corresponding simplicity of character. Putting

aside concrete examples of the past generation within one's own knowledge, the Punches of the period, the novels of Thackeray and Dickens, and biographies like that of the late Master of Balliol give the mere reader an excellent idea of what the early Victorian did and did not approve.

The early Victorian seems to have had generous impulses, coupled with a perilous tendency to cant, a robust sense of humour tempered by a somewhat barbaric prudery, and a profound conviction that no one "deserved" to be alive who did not find life worth living. His attitude to women (if I except one or two writers like John Stuart Mill) was quite consistent with his attitude towards life and had all the elements of a somewhat unenlightened chivalry. A woman ought *par excellence* to be guileless, fragile, inconsequent, loyal, and virtuous to the verge of imbecility, though the dim recognition of a disproportionately increasing female population allowed of obviously unmarriageable women writing novels or looking after the poor. But in no case did it seem proper that a woman, except in quite exalted circles, should possess, or at any rate show, a sense of humour. Those lines of Kingsley which have won an immortality in copy-books, beginning: "Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever," are more characteristic of the time than one likes to think, and admirably illustrate the early Victorian enthusiasm for the obvious and for the "Nonconformist meat tea" style of thought and expression.

This conception of women was, of course, bound up with all the prudery of an imperfectly civilised society. Most elderly people now alive must have known in their youth of at least one household where the bare mention of George Eliot's name was tabooed, and young ladies about to be married were often prevented from looking at their marriage settlements because these documents made provision for possible children of the marriage.

Such eccentric reticence was quite in tune with the pseudo-asceticism of the early Victorians, which made a positive virtue of ignoring the plain facts of physiology. A generation which in all stages of life so plentifully consumed muffins, pastry, and sweet wines, was certainly not alive to the great ethical truth that a certain discrimination in diet is a very essential part of one's duty to one's neighbour. Comfort with frugality seems to have been an idea quite as incomprehensible to the past generation as comfort without luxury seems to the present.

Major Pendennis's description of the early Victorians is as concise as one could wish. In the bitterness of his decline (which has perhaps more real pathos than Colonel Newcome's) he calls the then rising generation "a parcel of damned cotton-spinners and utilitarians and young sprigs of parsons, with their hair combed down the backs of their heads." Yet, though few ages appear so unattractive and unpicturesque as the early Victorian age, it is impossible not to recognise its sterling virtues, which were

intimately bound up with its seriousness of temperament.

The early Victorian had a keener sense of honour than our generation; he was readier to resent imputations on his character, and much less inclined to haggle over small gains. He paid his doctor's and lawyer's bills like a man, and was, in every sense of the word, more incorruptible. He respected professional etiquette to what we should now think a Quixotic extent; for instance, in the early forties, briefless barristers often refused to take money from newspapers to which they contributed. He took the trouble to arrive at convictions on important subjects and even to act on them. He would fight for a principle even to the extent of spending money on its behalf. He thought it his duty to read, and often to buy, books purporting to deal with serious subjects. And, above all, he really wished to help the poor without allowing them to be indirectly oppressed by the legislation of faddists. We may well feel of the 19th century what Mill said of the 18th—that it was an age of "strong and brave men."

A Study in Bereavement

(Written in 1954)

An old man looking back on life usually remembers a few scenes of really striking irony—and probably the most striking irony is that of almost unconscious hypocrisy. There was more of this in the unenlightened though eminently virtuous generation of the first decade of this century, than there is now. Perhaps this was due to their not having seen, like ourselves, any really practical application of medical science to what was in those days called the "mystery" of life and death. My readers may possibly remember that it was not till 1904 that Lord Treadwell discovered how life might be prolonged until senile decay had set in, and in this way completely revolutionised the scientific aspect of what is still called "death"—a term which then had a very different meaning. But the old ideas lived on, and it was not until 1915 that the community began to adapt itself to the altered requirements of a more stationary population. It is curious to remember how my elders talked of cancer as an incurable disease, and of suicide as a deplorable aberration if not as a crime.

But I am wandering and must return to my reminiscence. In the autumn of 1904—when I was a young man of 47—I remember attending the "funeral" of a distant cousin called Mrs. Mitcham. In those days comparatively few persons were cremated, and owing to the uncertain tenure of life it was thought correct on such occasions to simulate an almost unseemly grief instead of accepting the natural close of human activity in a spirit of rational resignation. The following narrative may interest the younger generation as showing the odd mixture of knowledge and ignorance, sentimentality and insensibility, displayed by their ancestors. My memory of the episode is so vivid that I have been able to reproduce almost exactly the remarks made by the persons then present. Though I have lost sight of most of them, the probability is that some are still alive, and I have, therefore, preferred to use fictitious names.

There was, as I remember, at this "funeral" a certain Mrs. Sophia Cardew, the only sister of Mrs. Mitcham, with three more or less young daughters; a Mr. John Matheson, a stockbroker, a pathetic-looking old woman called Mrs. Boles, and two philanthropic ladies of the parish (Miss Molesworth and Miss Honiton). Even in those days there lingered the Victorian custom of making the family solicitor read the will of the person who had been buried, and this function was accordingly performed by a solicitor of the name of Binks, who recently died at the age of 103.

The will began more or less in the common form of the time. The testatrix had left her "faithful landlady," Mrs. Boles, £75 a year, so long as she looked after the pug and three canaries, and three small legacies to Binks and her two co-district visitors, Miss Molesworth and Miss Honiton, respectively. Mrs. Cardew was to have the life interest in £7000, which at her death was to be equally divided among such of her daughters as should be married by the 1st April, 1907, when the eldest would be thirty-seven and the youngest twenty-nine. Mr. Matheson, the deceased's son-in-law, was residuary legatee. He was a widower with one child, and Andrew Mitcham, his brother-in-law, had died a reputed bachelor some years before.

The will was on the whole satisfactory to all parties. The landlady sat reflecting on what would best conduce to the longevity of pugs and canaries, and the Misses Cardew were quite old enough to realise that their aunt's bequest was the best of all possible excuses for open dalliance with gentlemen, who, according to the absurd fashion then in vogue, reserved to themselves the monopoly of courtship. Mr. Matheson and Mr. Binks most imprudently drank a quantity of "brown sherry"—a poisonous liquor which had not then been condemned by any Minister of Hygiene.*

The decorous torpor of the scene was suddenly interrupted by the appearance of the local doctor,

* If I remember right this ministry did not exist till 1908.—T. P.

in a garment called a "frock coat" and *pince-nez*. An early marriage had forced him into a country practice, but had not entirely destroyed a really intellectual curiosity of a kind then comparatively rare.

"I have come," he began abruptly, "on a very urgent matter. I was up in town early this morning, and with great luck managed to see my old contemporary, Julius Treadwell, whom you may recently have seen boomed in the half-penny papers. I had thought he was a complete charlatan, and wished, if so, to have the means of thoroughly exposing him. But he took me off to Bart's* and, in the presence of a most distinguished company, succeeded in restoring life to a man who had been dead two days. He sets the heart going after four hours' work, and calculates that in such a case life may continue quite five years more, or conceivably until senile decay sets in. We did this with closed doors, but no doubt the evening papers will be full of it. He showed that even after four days he has a reasonable chance of success, as he has now discovered a means of combating any organic changes that may have set in."

The company began to look more and more scandalised, and Mr. Binks suddenly drew himself up with great solemnity.

"My *dear* sir!" he remarked, "I am surprised that you should burst in upon us in this way. Such topics are scarcely seemly on an occasion

* A big London hospital.

of this kind, and I have not yet finished explaining the will to the beneficiaries."

"Come, come," said the doctor, "you don't seem to see what I'm driving at. I arranged with Treadwell that I would wire to him immediately on obtaining your consent to try his skill. He will have innumerable applications from all parts of the country to-morrow and, having regard to the startling circumstances of his position, he says he must have a thousand guinea fee even if he fails."

"I think," replied the solicitor more emphatically, "that you misapprehend the situation. My clients are, I am sure, not at all prepared to allow such sacrilegious experiments to be tried on their beloved relative. I must also point out that the whole procedure seems to me grossly illegal and, in any case, no body can be exhumed without the leave of the Home Secretary."

At this point I remember that Mrs. Cardew went off into a fit of hysterics, which brought the nerves of the whole party to extreme tension.

"Dr. Mills," remarked Mr. Matheson, "I entirely agree with my solicitor in thinking that this subject should not have been broached in the presence of the ladies. But, apart from any other consideration, I think it would be cruel to restore life to anyone who has gone to his last rest. I go further, and maintain that it is utterly contrary to the dictates of the Christian religion, however unimportant you may think it."

"You had better call in the parson on that point," retorted the doctor, becoming slightly

heated; "but here I see you all in deep mourning, and presumably afflicted by the loss of the lady who has just died. In all seriousness I hold out a prospect of restoring her to you, and you immediately flout it. I can hardly imagine that you are influenced by the question of expense."

"The fee," said Mr. Binks, with awakened interest, "would, I suppose, be paid by the executors* as a part of the funeral expenses; it would therefore be deducted from the residue, and would ultimately fall on the residuary legatee —that is, of course, *you*, Mr. Matheson."

"Of course, if I thought there was anything in the idea I should have nothing to say against it," was Mr. Matheson's rapid comment.

"Properly speaking," continued Mr. Binks, "nothing should, in my opinion, be done without the consent of the deceased—but I feel slightly bewildered by the proposal. In any case the fee should, I think, be apportioned among the beneficiaries. I should add that, even if Mrs. Mitcham were alive again, she would have no means of replacing the income of a thousand guineas."

"Interesting as these details may be to the legal mind," said the doctor, addressing himself to the whole company, "the question now before all of you is whether or not any of you wish to

* In those days the State had not yet taken over these functions, and even solicitors were allowed to act in this capacity until 1921, when the great principle of "compulsory administration" was inaugurated by the centenarian Lord Chancellor.—T. P.

see Mrs. Mitcham alive again. The man I saw this morning is now lying in bed in a perfectly normal condition and talking as anyone might who had emerged from a long catalepsy. I see myself no reason for seriously doubting that the same result might not be achieved here."

Mrs. Cardew had, meantime, slightly recovered, and suddenly observed:

"You know perfectly well, doctor, that this is sanctioned by no law, human or divine."

Her daughters did not seem to know quite what to say, but the eldest, whose share of the £7000 seemed unpleasantly contingent, turned to her mother:—

"You must remember, mamma, that modern science does wonderful things. As Mr. Fulton said in his sermon last week, scientific discoveries are often providential. In that case they are like new Acts of Parliament, and become a law in themselves. Think of having dear auntie back again! We needn't see her till she has recovered."

The landlady, who, as far as I remember, cared more for the dead woman than her relations, here showed a strong inclination to tears. At the same time Miss Molesworth and Miss Honiton rose, and said they thought that Mr. Fulton should be consulted before any decision was arrived at. I understood Miss Honiton to add that she had never thought she would live to see those beautiful words "Earth to earth, dust to dust," entirely lose their meaning.*

* A quotation from a liturgy then in use at "funerals."

At this moment there was a knock at the door, and the doctor's servant entered with a telegram. The doctor opened and read it.

"Can no longer come down booked for next fortnight. Treadwell."

A visible relief came over every one.

"I wonder if the remarks of Lazarus's family were correctly reported," muttered the doctor as he closed the door behind him.

Lazarus, I may add, was a personage whose name, though now only familiar to scholars, was commonly cited at that time to illustrate what was then considered a miraculous recovery of consciousness.

Lady Hamilton and "Horatia"

THE papers of my great-grandfather, Sir Harris Nicolas, have recently come into my possession, and the letters addressed to him by Nelson's daughter, Horatia, while he was bringing out his edition of Nelson's despatches, which have slumbered in an old trunk for upwards of sixty years, still possess a certain interest. They can hardly be said to contribute new facts, except for showing that Mr. Matcham, her uncle by marriage, fetched Horatia from Calais after Lady Hamilton's death, and not the 2nd Earl Nelson and Mr. Henry Cadogan, as is commonly related, but they undoubtedly shed some light on Lady Hamilton's character, and Horatia's recollections of her early life with Lady Hamilton after Nelson's death cannot be called dull.

Sir Harris first met Horatia, who was born on the 29th January, 1801, and in 1822 married the Rev. Philip Ward, in 1844, and their correspondence lasted till 1846 and chiefly consisted of an examination of the various fictions employed by Nelson and Lady Hamilton to conceal the parentage of Horatia. Both Sir Harris and Mrs. Ward died in ignorance of the real facts, and in his last volume of the despatches Sir

Harris even conjectures that the relations of Nelson and Lady Hamilton were Platonic, although his opinion on that one point must subsequently have changed and was never more than merely conjectural. But Sir Harris did not long survive the completion of his Nelson volumes. Worn out by a succession of misfortunes and disappointments, he sank under them, like Sir Walter Scott, and died at Boulogne in 1848, engaged on fresh work to the last. He was in his last days, editing the papers of Sir Hudson Lowe, and had even jotted down some notes for a history of Boulogne. His comparatively short career (for he died just under fifty) had been indeed full and varied. In his teens he had captured French frigates off the coast of Calabria and invented a fresh signalling system. Just out of his teens he had been called to the Bar and stood for Parliament in the cause of Reform; he had written erudite works on every conceivable topic which had, as he told Carlyle, "ruined nearly all the booksellers in London"; he had spent an extraordinary amount of his energies and patrimony in getting rid of the abuses in connection with public records, built up a flourishing practice in peerage cases, which fell greatly in value owing to Sir Robert Peel's decision in 1840 not to revive peerages in abeyance, and kept up a running commentary on general topics in most of the newspapers and reviews of the day. History and research as we know it now had scarcely come into existence in those days, and he suffered as all pioneers must.

But his friend, Mrs. Horatia Ward, lived to an advanced age and died in 1881 without ever knowing, so far as I am aware, who her mother was or seeing among the Morrison papers (which were not acquired by Mr. Morrison till 1887) the documents which have now established the facts of the case.

These facts are as follows. As the result of Nelson's intimacy with Lady Hamilton in the spring of 1800 Horatia was born on the 29th January, 1801, actually at 23, Piccadilly (Sir William Hamilton's house), and was within a week of that smuggled by Lady Hamilton (some say in a muff) to a house in Marylebone, where she was put in the care of a nurse. Lady Hamilton frequently visited the child there, and the child was often brought to the house of Sir William Hamilton. The child was baptised in 1803 as Horatia Nelson Thompson at the Marylebone Registry, and her birth was antedated to October 1800, presumably to antedate the time of the conception, and thus to conceal the fact of her real origin.

Nelson's letters at first mention a "Mr. Thompson," the fictitious father, but he afterwards acknowledges himself as the father, and constantly refers to an equally fictitious "Mrs. Thompson" as the mother. The name is not always spelt the same way. A letter from Nelson to Lady Hamilton, the existence of which was unknown both to Sir Harris and Mrs. Ward, has long since shown that Lady Hamilton was the mother, and further documents

have shown that in 1804 Lady Hamilton had another child by Nelson called "Emma," who did not long survive her birth. Lady Hamilton was appointed by Nelson to be guardian of the child, and in all letters sent through the post (and not by a trusted messenger) she is referred to as such. The recapitulation of these facts is for the general reader a necessary preliminary to the perusal of the following letters.

It is certainly odd that Lady Hamilton should not only have convinced Nelson that Horatia was her first child (which was not the fact), but also have successfully prevented her own daughter from knowing that she was her mother, and concealed from her the birth of the second child. After this we may even believe that Sir William Hamilton remained unaware of Horatia's birth in his own house. Lady Hamilton had, of course, every reason for not acknowledging Horatia as her own child, since otherwise her intimacy with Nelson was not strictly proved, and she could always claim the benefit of the doubt—a most important consideration, having regard to the fact that she was always expecting and asking for a public pension. The first extract I shall give of the letters to Sir Harris is as follows :—

"Would she (*i.e.* Lady Hamilton) have dared to have a child brought constantly to her husband's house had she had a nearer interest in it than that of friendship to those to whom it belonged? It has always appeared to me that she was just the woman who, to gain a stronger hold on Lord Nelson's affection, would be likely to undertake the care of a child which he might feel anxious about to show herself above common jealousies. The

only quarrel which I ever heard between Lady H. and her mother took place when we lived at Richmond, when I suppose I had been very naughty, for I was in sad disgrace and had received a most pathetic lecture on the error of my conduct. Mrs. Cadogan pleaded for me, saying that I had done nothing requiring such a severe scolding, when Lady H. became angry and said that she alone had authority over me. Mrs. Cadogan, rather irritated, said, 'Really, Emma, you make as much fuss about the child as if she were your own daughter,' when Lady H. turned round much incensed as I was present and replied, 'Perhaps she is.' Mrs. Cadogan looked at her and replied, 'Emma, that will not do with me; you know that I know better.' Lady H. then ordered me out of the room. On her death-bed at Calais I earnestly prayed her to tell me who my mother was but she would not, influenced then, I think, by the fear that I might leave her."

Another letter contains an interesting account of Lady Hamilton's movements after Nelson's death.

"Poor Lady H., as you are aware, left Merton in consequence of her not being able to remain there for pecuniary reasons. I believe that then she was considerably involved, but of course I was too young to know much about it. She then went to Richmond to live and took a seven years' lease of the house in Herring Court. After a year or two she left and took lodgings in town in Bond Street, where her brother died. She then quitted those apartments and took lodgings in Piccadilly where she stayed about a few months. From there she went to board and lodge in a house in Dover Street and after that took a house in Bond Street where she remained till she became too involved to remain 'at large' and then went to Fulham to Mrs. Billington where she remained secreted for some weeks, having sent what she most valued in papers before her. From thence she went to Temple Place in the rules of the Bench, and after living

in them for more than a year she left London for Calais. At the time of her death she was in great distress, and had I not, unknown to her, written to Lord Nelson to ask the loan of £10, and to another kind friend of hers, who immediately sent her £20, she would not literally have had one shilling till her next allowance became due. Latterly she was hardly sensible. I imagine that her illness originally began by being bled whilst labouring under an attack of jaundice whilst she lived at Richmond. From that time she never was well, and added to this the baneful habit she had of taking spirits and wine to a fearful degree brought on water on the chest. She died in January 1814 and was buried in the burying ground attached to the town. That was a sad, miserable time to me. Latterly her mind became so irritable by drinking that I had written to Mr. Matcham, and he had desired that I would lose no time in getting some respectable person to take me over and that I was to come to them, where I should always find a home. After her death, as soon as he heard of it, he came to Dover to fetch me. With all Lady H.'s faults, and she had *many*, she had many fine qualities."

and Horatia goes on to mention that almost to the end Lady Hamilton had spent all the interest on Lord Nelson's legacy, which she received as guardian, entirely on her daughter's education.

Perhaps the strictest test of human virtue is that of plain honesty in dealing with money, and it is good to know that Lady Hamilton, under the severest temptation, conscientiously applied the money of which she was virtually a trustee.

In connection with Lady Hamilton's finances, I found a copy of the following pathetic appeal written by Lady Hamilton to Lord Sidmouth,

which, so far as I know, has not been printed before.

"COMMON OF ST. PIERE.
"*October 7th*, 1814.

"MY LORD,—It is with the utmost anguish and regret I write to you. Sir William Scott was so kind, knowing my services to my country, to speak to your Lordship on behalf of myself and Horatia, the daughter of the glorious and virtuous Nelson. If there is humanity still left in British hearts they will not suffer us to die with famine in a foreign country. For God's sake then send us some relief. Let Horatia, who will be fourteen the 29th of October, finish her education, let her be provided for. At present we have not one shilling in our pockets, although I spent all I had on the family of Earl Nelson. He never takes notice of his brother's child although he *knows well* she is his child. I will not tease your Lordship any more only to say if Horatia will be provided for and believe, my Lord,

"Your grateful,

"EMMA HAMILTON.

"My direction is chez Desin."

The next letter, written after the publication of the last volume of the despatches, shows that a letter printed by a certain Mr. Harrison, and, as Mr. Sichel conjectures, probably stolen from Lady Hamilton by her secretary, was shown to be genuine, contrary to the opinion of Mrs. Ward. Sir Harris writes of Mr. Harrison, that his life of Lord Nelson, published in 1806, "was written under the direction of Lady Hamilton with the view of supporting her claims upon the Government," but he and Lady Hamilton seem subsequently to have quarrelled. On the

4th November, 1844, Mrs. Ward wrote to Sir Harris as follows :—

"It appears to me that Harrison, who was a needy man, thought he might oblige Lady H. to give him a certain sum by the threat of publishing letters which he had in his possession of hers, when he found that she had it not to give him he immediately turned his head to concoct a set of letters from those in his hands which would bring him in a handsome remuneration."

Various reasons are brought forward to support this hypothesis, but Mrs. Ward's conjectures are generally unlucky.

On the 21st August, 1846, she wrote to Sir Harris as follows :—

"My Dear Sir,—Most correctly have you judged when you said that I should be much shocked to find those wretched letters are genuine. Alas that such a master-mind should be subject to such a weakness. Of what a strange medley is the human mind constituted. I cannot, however, help rejoicing (I hope not from any love of dissimulation) that these letters *did not* come under your notice till after the 7th vol. was published ; had you seen them earlier you would have felt bound to take some notice of them, now they cannot sully *his* fame, as I firmly believe most of the readers of that unfortunate publication of Mr. Harrison's disbelieved them—better so. Still I do not alter my opinion that Lady Hamilton could not have been my mother. In the letters as printed there does not appear any reserve in Lord Nelson's manner of addressing Lady H. from fear of the letters not reaching her or he would not have expressed himself as he did in them.

"Yet I do not recollect one in which I am named as a mutual tie between them or any allusion of the kind."

Mrs. Ward's persistent declarations that Lady

Hamilton was not her mother seem to me quite sincere, but they are puzzling in the light of a letter dated the 18th April, 1813, in which Lady Hamilton throughout describes herself as her mother. The only explanation appears to be that Lady Hamilton may have adopted the habit of calling herself Horatia's mother, though it was clearly understood between them that she was not. Such a mode of address is constantly used by step-children and sons-in-law and daughters-in-law.

The other letters in my possession have no particular interest. They wander round such topics as the purchase of Nelson's coat by the Prince Consort, and the silence of Nelson's solicitor, Mr. Haslewood, who probably bore the secret to his grave. But there is a certain comedy in the launching of these laborious conjectures while documentary evidence of the truth was lying hidden all the time; and the success with which Lady Hamilton concealed the truth from her own daughter makes it a little more possible to believe that Sir William Hamilton's attitude to Nelson's relations with Lady Hamilton was not so philosophic as some have imagined.

Oxford and Cambridge—A Study in Types.

It is strange that the world, again awake to the charm of 'Friendship's Garland,' should have allowed to fall out of print a little book entitled 'Sketches from Cambridge by a Don,' written by the late Sir Leslie Stephen, and published anonymously in 1865. There are few books of more real insight and quaint humour; and most of it is as true to-day as it was forty years ago, especially the passages contrasting Oxford and Cambridge. Stephen identifies himself with Cambridge in the most spontaneous fashion; we feel as if the writer had never ceased to be part of the place where he resided till well into middle life.

For this reason it may be interesting to touch on some of the traits in his writings which seem typical of Cambridge, and in so doing it is almost impossible to avoid comparing the influences of Oxford and Cambridge as Stephen himself does in the 'Sketches.' His luminous and pointed remarks unconsciously show how strongly he felt himself to be the product of his own University, and how the essential characteristics of Cambridge may best appear by being put into relief against those of Oxford.

It is difficult to generalise about the differences between Oxford and Cambridge without making a very careful selection of types. In the nineteenth century I should be inclined to put forward Ruskin, Symonds, and Newman as typical of Oxford, and Wordsworth, Fawcett, and Tennyson as typical of Cambridge. Stephen's own choice of types fell respectively on Macaulay and Gladstone. His remarks on the subject are well worth quoting:

"We [*i.e.* Cambridge men] despise, or at any rate care little for, abstract disquisition. Representing in this respect the commoner English type, we have the strongest objection to look beyond our noses. We take what lies next to us and don't trouble our heads about its remoter bearings. Our studies are all modelled in accordance with a strictly practical view of the matter, that is, as I have said before, with a view to affording a good test for examinations; and we are inclined to sneer at loftier but more aerial considerations. Our ideal takes in the good and the bad points of rough, vigorous, common sense; whereas the Oxford man is not content without a touch of more or less refined philosophy. We generally take a narrower but what is commonly called a more practical view of matters.

"Which of these two types is the best is not for me to say; but the distinction which I have endeavoured to describe runs through all our manifestations in the most marked degree. Mr. Gladstone, with his great abilities somewhat marred with over-acuteness and polish, is an excellent type of the Oxford mind. . . . Perhaps I might mention Lord Macaulay, with his clear and energetic, but limited intellect, as, in many respects, a fair specimen of the Cambridge tone of thought."

If we look for an obvious antitype to Stephen himself, there is none better than his contem-

porary, Matthew Arnold. Oddly enough, Arnold came from a college which has not invariably turned out the pure Oxonian type. T. H. Green, R. L. Nettleship, the late Archbishop of Canterbury, and Arnold Toynbee, to take examples at random, all had an extremely practical bent without the Oxonian tendency to rhetorical expression and "aerial" speculation that is to be remarked in J. A. Symonds or Mr. Swinburne.

The contrast between Arnold and Stephen is all the more interesting because they seem to have had great points of resemblance. Both had the most lovable personal qualities; both were keenly interested in literature; theologically, both inclined to a more or less passive scepticism, and politically, neither was prepared to think along party lines. Ecclesiastically, both were Erastians (Arnold from the sentimental point of view, and Stephen probably from the legal point of view); each wrote more for the student than the general reader, yet neither lacked an intimate interest in humanity combined with a deep vein of tenderness and melancholy. The strong points of contrast between their writings were, as it seems to me, largely due to differences of environment in early life, and illustrate in a striking way the typical differences between Oxford and Cambridge.

Stephen curiously suggests this in an essay on Arnold. He writes:

"A hard-headed senior-wrangler is in his own conceit a superior being to a flighty double first-class man. But perhaps his solid conviction that he was in the right

faith made him rather unfitted to judge of the Sister University. He thought her impulsive, ill-balanced, too easily turned into the pursuit of theological, philosophical, and literary chimeras ; and therefore was unjust to her substantial merits, and even to the intellectual impulse which, with all its vagaries, was yet better than stagnation."

That is an admirably fair piece of writing, and it is possibly more autobiographical than it seems at first sight.

Perhaps the most radical contrast between the two men is that which appears between Stephen's "fear of enthusiasm" on the one side, and Arnold's tendency to emotional rhetoric on the other. Except possibly in his 'In Praise of Walking' and one or two other stray pieces, Stephen never "let himself go." The repressed sentiment that occasionally emerges in his Life of Dr. Johnson is typical of his style. He mentions the founder of the "Newdigate" at Oxford having "as much sense as could be expected from the founder of a prize poem." Stephen did once own to having written verse himself, but it was "at a very early period of infancy. . . ." "The subject was the 'Prairie on Fire,' the only verses which I can at present remember being :

> See the bisons in despair
> How they tear their grizzly hair,

or words to that effect. A difficulty in ensuring a sufficient supply of rhymes caused me to abandon this ambition." Arnold, on the other

hand, besides writing excellent poetry, gave free rein in his prose to all that engaging rhetoric and unction of style of which Renan was so great a master. On the whole, we may be grateful to writers who do. I mention the characteristic, however, only by way of emphasising the fact that Arnold's tendency was due to the warmth and colour of the Oxford tradition. Such a school may often ensnare a writer into subtle fallacies or useless digressions, although in a case like that of Arnold the result has a rare charm of its own. But if we return to the "narrower view of matters," Arnold could never, like Stephen, have written the model summary of a man's career which made the 'Dictionary of National Biography' a practicable enterprise.

The same difference of training—not, as I think, of temperament—manifests itself in religious matters. Arnold is always giving expression to a touchingly retrospective melancholy. Whether we turn to 'Geist's Grave' or 'Dover Beach' or the sonnets, we invariably find him trying to reconstruct the cosy creed of his fathers, to believe that all is here for the best, and that we all meet happily afterwards. Possibly Stephen felt all the force of what he calls "musical moans over spilt milk," but, if so, he never confessed it. He writes that he found he had never properly believed the creed in which he was brought up, and so was not pained by its loss. It was therefore irrelevant for him to speculate on its merits (if any) as a means of consolation. He prides himself on the indifference of Cambridge to

theology. In all the heated controversy of Cambridge on the war of the Federals and Confederates

it was only necessary to turn the conversation upon theology to smooth the troubled waters. This would, I believe, be a dangerous expedient in a country parish, or possibly some other place. But at Cambridge I have always found that it is a topic which everyone can discuss in perfect good temper except the few whom it sends to sleep.

This remark certainly would not apply to modern Oxford—even undergraduate Oxford, which not so very long ago was stirred to its depths by a proposal to add one of Mr. Walsh's works to the Union Library, and where a gentleman who recently proposed that examiners in Theology need not necessarily be in Holy Orders, was greeted in Convocation with cries of "traitor."

With his curious insight into the British mind, Mr. Gladstone once observed that Englishmen hated the Pope and an abstract proposition more than anything else. In respect of the latter he ought to have excepted Oxford, where abstract propositions usually excite general interest and approval, though there have always been exceptions. I once asked the late Mr. York Powell whether it was worth my while to read Hegel's 'Philosophy of History,' and he replied that if I wanted to read off my subject (which was history), I should be more profitably occupied in the study of steam-engines. But Oxford is seldom privileged to produce regius professors of his type, and perhaps never will again. Most readers,

however, will agree that Arnold's pages bristle with *formulæ* and abstract propositions, whereas, except in his more recent writings, Stephen's statements are always strictly qualified and limited. In his later works, for example, the 'English Utilitarians,' and notably in 'English Literature and Society in the Eighteenth Century,' he became bolder, and his generalisations are all the more valuable because they fit the facts like a glove. The last-named book is astonishing in the way it combines close accuracy and suggestive theories. Even here, however, he characteristically remarks: "I hope I have said nothing original." On the other hand it is noteworthy that the school of Oxford historians who have made the loudest declarations in support of strict and technical research, have often implicitly started from the most surprisingly bold suppositions. Freeman, for example, might deceive the casual reader by objecting to the Arthurian legend on the ground that "it proves nothing and teaches nothing," but one is tempted to suggest that the groundwork of his historical ideas was about as deductive and abstract as anything could be.

To turn to less scholastic matters, Arnold and Stephen both typified in themselves other minor differences between the manifestations of the academic spirit in Oxford and Cambridge. It has been said—I know not by whom—that whereas Cambridge may be provincial, Oxford is suburban. Some have, as I think unfairly, attributed the "suburban" character of Oxford

(*i.e.* its closer contact with London) to the alleged desire of Balliol to be "in the swim," and have supposed it to be originally fostered by the week-end visits of London celebrities which Jowett inaugurated. Such critics may fasten eagerly on certain passages in Mr. Belloc's great memoir of Mr. Josiah Lambkin, of Burford College, whose characteristics are not altogether unrecognisable in modern Oxford:

> He was the guest and honoured friend of the Duke of Cumberland, the Duke of Pembroke, the Duke of Limerick ("Mad Harry"), and the Duke of Lincoln; he had also the honour of holding a long conversation with the Duke of Berkshire, whom he met on the top of an omnibus in Piccadilly and instantly recognised.

Oxford, however, has been, for the last three centuries at least, more in touch with London than has Cambridge, and has generally prided herself on being less remote from "the great heart of the world." Parliaments have been held there, and, on the whole, despite her predilection for lost causes, she has been more involved in politics. Possibly it has resulted from this that Oxford has usually had more of the missionary spirit, and has more immediately influenced English thought. Arnold may have felt himself aloof from his Philistine countrymen, but he was keenly anxious to rouse them to a sense of higher things. Cambridge, on the other hand, has been more recluse and disinclined to be mixed up with public affairs. It is recorded of Stephen that he arrived in England fresh with the news of the Battle of Sedan, and only

mentioned the subject to a friend after two hours' animated conversation on less topical subjects. Such behaviour would rather shock an Oxford common-room, where the nightly discussion of London omnibus fares or of some new scheme for dealing with urban sewage, displays a properly cosmopolitan spirit.

Perhaps, however, this difference no longer continues in the same degree. It is said that a political pamphlet by an eminent Cambridge writer recently earned the distinction of being seriously studied by Cabinet Ministers for their edification. Certainly a visitor of both Universities would be equally impressed by the knowledge of general matters respectively shown there, even though Cambridge dons have not yet, so far as I know, occupied their vacations as war correspondents. Yet Oxford, however zealous to be in the world, preserves a certain affectation of exclusiveness.

An Oxford contemporary of mine once horrified his scout by announcing that he was going to Cambridge. "I've never been there," exclaimed the perturbed servitor. "Ain't it something in the Keble line, sir?" This somewhat disdainful attitude has, I fear, not always been confined to anti-clerical scouts, and is in some measure characteristic of the conventional attitude of Oxford, not only to Cambridge, but also to the world at large. Many of Arnold's most enthusiastic admirers have often felt repelled by a phraseology which was, after all, a mere mannerism in a singularly benevolent personality.

Translated into the flesh, this mannerism is precisely what constitutes the "Oxford manner." This element of apparent condescension is conspicuously absent in Stephen. Both Arnold and he had real humour, but Arnold too often makes the reader feel that the writer is laughing as much at him as with him, whereas Stephen is more genial. No one can help being amused by Stephen's account of how Bentham's wish to promote the greatest happiness of the greatest number was marred by his habit of keeping both cats and mice in his study, but Stephen's pleasantry always leaves an agreeable after-taste of sympathy. Arnold's remarks on dissenters and the middle-class stir up in the reader all the acidity latent in the dyspeptic existence of our civilisation, and, moreover, suggest a superiority of attitude which was probably not felt by the writer.

These interesting contrasts between two men —not so very unlike each other in themselves— may, I think, fairly be attributed to those differences of environment which in youth leave an ineffaceable impression, but which are in themselves hard to analyse. It is no less difficult to explain such a divergence as exists between Oxford and Cambridge than to search out the causes that differentiate communities or nations. Perhaps something may be ascribed to locality. Cambridge has for the most part been recruited from the northern and eastern districts of England, whereas Oxford is geographically more connected with the west. The western popu-

lation is on the whole more Celtic in character, while the Teutonic element is more deeply rooted in the north and east. This broad fact might explain some of the differences, but the speculation is obviously too uncertain to be seriously followed up. Yet, to take an example on a smaller scale, most men acquainted with the history of Balliol would agree that some of the essential characteristics of the college are in a great measure due to the constant immigration of Scottish students, and very probably the same causes have been at work in both instances.

In conclusion, it may be interesting to speculate how far the ordinary man of affairs carries with him the influence of his University through life. Such an attempt is, of course, somewhat baffled by the variations of the individual. Mr. Balfour, for instance, might well be imagined to have sprung from Oxford, and Mr. Morley from Cambridge, by any one who should compare 'The Foundations of Belief' with 'Compromise.' The general impression would seem to be that the Cambridge man takes to the professions (except possibly that of journalism) with more readiness than the Oxford man. His interests are perhaps less numerous and his power of applying himself to the task immediately in front of him more pronounced.

Nevertheless, the Oxonian has his compensations in later life. He may begin by criticising the form rather than the substance of the matter he has in hand (even so far as to make marginal notes concerning the grammar of Blue-books),

and may possibly not be so quick in coming to the point. But he will always respond to a greater number of stimuli, there will probably be more colour in his life, and he will have a better chance of being proof against the "ossifying process" of middle age. In politics, Mr. Gladstone was certainly more receptive, as he got older, than Macaulay. It is scarcely possible to imagine Ruskin, had he been drilled in the austerer traditions of Cambridge, beginning his splendid attack on the Gradgrind school of economists at the time of life which he chose for it.

Oxford may well console herself with the saying "Qui vit sans folie n'est pas si sage qu'il croit." The intellectual indiscretions of youth have their ultimate compensations, and even the intellectual indiscretions of old age have a certain gallantry about them. Education has been defined as "the enlargement of the personality," and if this definition be accepted, Oxford may still be content to dispense with engineering and agricultural triposes.

A Romance of 1821

CONSCIOUS as we all are of our elders' shortcomings, we are sometimes inclined not to credit our more remote ancestors with qualities that our elders did not possess. In our day we are all a little pleased with ourselves because we have broken down something of the barrier which was supposed to divide the sexes in what Mr. Wells has unkindly called an era of "sham delicacy, nasty sentiment, and giggles." Our young ladies read and attend the plays of Mr. Bernard Shaw and sundry other authors from whom they hope to derive a knowledge of the world. They share masculine recreations, and are able to discuss masculine topics. We may legitimately pride ourselves on this emancipation. Indeed it is only to be regretted in the interests of female hygiene that Mrs. Grundy should still frown upon pipes and cigars, even if she may occasionally connive at the insidious cigarette.

At the same time we are a little unfair to the ladies of the pre-Victorian age, and the conventions of 1840 to 1860 loom a little too conspicuously in our horizon. During that period political power and social influence came to a number of most estimable persons who did not exactly know what the proprieties demanded. The poor, who

have no time for pretences and euphemisms, accept and discuss the obvious facts of life with a certain frank rationality. The properly civilised and educated person may have recourse to euphemisms, but endeavours to discard pretences. Our immediate ancestors rather fell between two stools, and their attitude was undoubtedly responsible for a certain amount of sentimental hypocrisy which frequently led to unhappy marriages.

But this was, after all, merely a passing phase in English life Kate Nickleby is not the typical girl of English literature, and, as an antidote to her, we may do well to recall some of Shakespeare's most fascinating heroines, the memoirs of Lady Fanshawe, the letters of Dorothy Osborne, Fielding's adorable Sophia Western, and even Miss Jane Austen's young ladies.

These reflections are to some extent suggested by a very human document which I recently unearthed from a number of old manuscripts. It consists of a tiny little book bound in red leather and written in a flowing Italian hand by a girl of twenty-one to a youth of twenty-two to whom she was then engaged and whom she married soon afterwards. It certainly shows a laudable ambition to settle all outstanding differences as much as possible before the irrevocable act of marriage, and it records the results of "five months' strict observation." The book begins as follows :—

"CHRISTMAS, 1821.

"These desultory remarks on your character, my beloved ——, were suggested to me by your so repeatedly

asking my opinion of the character given you by Miss F. I know with your primitive notions of love, you will think *my* affection for you ought to blind me to all your little failings, but if I am less lenient to them than Miss F. remember it is because I am more anxious than she could possibly be that your merits may be seen in their proper light and not obscured by any failings."

The lady displays peculiar wisdom in warning her lover, who afterwards achieved some eminence, against the way in which young men sometimes resent the unreadiness of the world to take their good qualities for granted, though she might perhaps have added some reflections on the unreasoning acceptance of old age for its own sake which may also be observed :—

"She has justly ranked pride as one of the leading features of your character. I admit that in some instances it may operate beneficially on you and save you from follies . . . which a man of less pride would not hesitate to commit; still, carried to the excess which I have sometimes seen in you, it becomes a vice, by generating hatred, revenge, and all their hideous feelings, and occasionally so fetters your excellent judgment as to induce you to regard the natural reserve which many people feel for the virtues or merits of a young man, when experience has not convinced them of their existence, as a personal insult."

The young gentleman appears to have professed a Byronic misogyny which was perhaps fashionable in the cultivated youth of the period, but was somewhat disconcerting to his future wife :—

"However much you may smile at me and call me the champion of my sex, still I cannot help noticing to you the contempt which you so often express, and still oftener

evince by your manners, for women. That my opinion of them may perhaps be more exalted than they actually deserve I do not dispute, but surely it is neither flattering nor pleasing to hear a young man who contemplates marriage strenuously endeavouring to depreciate that sex from whom he will derive most of the comforts of his future life. I know and acknowledge that you feel an individual respect for the virtues of a few of the sex with whom you happen to be intimate, but your judgment has been so allured by the fine poetry of Lord Byron, warped by prejudices contracted in early life in those climes where sexual slavery prevails and profligacy is tolerated and practised, from reading works which describe only the feelings and passions of those women whose laxity of principle reflects a partial disgrace on the whole sex, and lastly from living in a metropolis without the comforts of home and comparatively secluded from society where the mild radiance of female virtues shines the most conspicuous, and forced into that, which corrupts the heart and greatly influences the opinion. How different would be the sentiments of a man who had been fostered in the bosom of a domestic and united family, who could reflect with gratitude and love on the numberless little incidents which press on his memory, where an affectionate mother has cheerfully sacrificed her personal feelings or deprived herself of some enjoyment for his sake, while the silent admiration painted on the cheek of a favourite sister, who probably shares the deprivation, reveals the unfeigned pleasure which she can derive from a brother's gratification."

The writer goes on to vindicate the qualities of women in a clear-sighted way almost worthy of Jane Austen :—

"To say that a mother will lay down her life for a child gives but a faint idea of what she is capable. Although such a sacrifice may add splendour to a tale of heroism or romance, there is but one effort required and pride lends its powerful aid in the accomplishment of

that effort; but to bear patiently and cheerfully a succession of petty inconveniences and wounded feelings, daily privations, loss of fortune . . . are evils which require more strength of mind to bear, inasmuch as the struggles are more frequent and derive no support from those powerful agents of the human mind, pride and ambition.

"That mind which has been accustomed to find these excellences in part of the sex, will easily credit the whole of the better part for the possession of them, and will find that they exist in nearly all, and that they only await time and circumstances to bring them into action."

It is only to be added that the writer of these words proved herself more than worthy of them in later days.

The digression, however, does not lead her off the track, and she rapidly proceeds to a less academic subject of apprehension :—

"You have a quickness and asperity of temper, my ——, which I sincerely wish did not exist. If your future companion were too amiable to notice, or too callous to be wounded by its effects, it would not be worthy of remark, for it would never subject you to the imputation of ill-temper, but unfortunately I am neither the one nor the other, and when that ungraceful asperity is exercised to me I cannot help thinking it the germ of future uneasiness; for in proportion to the happiness I feel in your unbounded kindness, so great is my wretchedness when that kindness is withheld, and that too by one on whom I have every claim which unlimited confidence and the sacrifice of friendship can exalt. I know your deep and almost romantic sense of honour, and to that I trust. Miss F. says you have great command of yourself, and I shall willingly agree in her opinion when I see that self-command exercised in checking these virulent and sarcastic feelings."

Some further sentences follow on the dangers

of Ambition and the possibilities of disappointment it brings, which are precociously wise, and to some extent, I fear, prophetic. She thus closes her discourse :—

"You will see, my dear ——, that these remarks have been carelessly put together. I appeal, therefore, to you to pardon any inaccuracies which your better sense may discover. Every merit, or failing, I have noticed I firmly believe has its existence in your mind. Jealousy I have not noticed, because in a lover it may be tolerated and I hope it will be discarded when you are united by a nearer tie. The latter are only venial errors which I am well convinced you can banish as soon as you please, and by so doing give me the highest satisfaction which the world can give by making that man pre-eminent for his virtues, loved by his friends, and respected by his enemies, whom I have pledged myself to love as my husband and esteem as my friend.

Should you be disposed to follow my example, I shall patiently listen to any follies which you may object to and will endeavour to eradicate them."

Here follows the date, "Monday December 24th, 1821," and the name and address of the writer on the next page :—

"Oblige me by preserving this little memorial, that, when years have chilled the ardour of youth and an increased intercourse with the world has dissipated our more romantic feelings, we may ensure that half hour's enjoyment which a retrospective view of our earlier years is sure to create, and thus give vitality to some latent spark of youthful fervour which even the icy breath of Time cannot extinguish."

Unhappily, history does not relate if the young man was ever disposed to follow his future wife's

example, or if on the other hand the little homily gave rise to any manifestation of the "quickness and asperity of temper" to which she refers. But as "extreme candour" was one of his characteristics let us hope that he enjoyed the prospect of a candid wife. The pleasing fact remains that their marriage was singularly happy and affectionate. The style of the little book resembles, I have been told, that of the theme which the schoolgirl of the period was taught to write and, if this be the case, one may be old-fashioned enough to wish that schoolgirls were still taught to write so precisely even if the precision sounds quaint to modern ears.

I have had some qualms about unveiling the privacy of this old romance, but the ordinary objections to the publication of love-letters does not quite apply to this case. As Mr. Chesterton has recently said, the affection of marriage is to some extent associated with a mutual fondness for amiable follies in each of the parties which neither interests the world at large nor exhibits the persons concerned quite as they would wish to be seen by their friends and acquaintances. "Dulce est desipere in loco" is an excellent motto for lovers, but they naturally prefer to be by themselves. My little book, however, is sternly practical, and I cannot help feeling that its engaging, if slightly didactic, author might have experienced some pleasure in the thought that an anonymous reproduction of her ingenuous exhortations should be given to the young men and maidens of another century.

Le Bonheur de ce Monde

LOOKING round the walls of my little study, I see framed and hanging a facsimile of a sonnet written and printed in the sixteenth century by one Plantin at Antwerp, with the above title. It has always a terrible irony when one remembers that the home and family of the author suffered the usual penalties of a Spanish siege. It runs:

Avoir une maison commode, propre et belle,
Un jardin tapissé d'espaliers odorans,
Des fruits, d'excellent vin, peu de train, peu d'enfans,
Posséder seul, sans bruit, une femme fidèle.

N'avoir dettes, amour, ni procès, ni querelle,
Ni de partage à faire avecque ses parens,
Se contenter de peu, n'espérer rien des grands,
Régler tous ses desseins sur un juste modèle.

Vivre avecque franchise et sans ambition,
S'adonner sans scrupule à la dévotion,
Domter ses passions, les rendre obéissantes,

Conserver l'esprit libre et le jugement fort,
Dire son Chapelet en cultivant ses entes,
C'est attendre chez soi bien doucement la mort.

I cannot imagine any ideal that would be so fiercely attacked by many persons in this country.

It is essentially middle class, it is the ambition of a man who has troubled little about public affairs and not more than necessary about his own. He might even forget to vote in a general election, or be indifferent as to the locality or residential environment of his garden. "Peu de train"! What a sordid, unenterprising notion!

But even more damaging criticisms can be imagined. The Progressive Liberal element among us—not to say the Nonconformist—will certainly be shocked at the early and prominent mention of "excellent wine," or, indeed, at its being mentioned at all, and the recommendation not to separate business from religion may seem to some a more sensible aspiration for one who has retired from business. "Peu d'enfans" is perhaps worse still. Such a desire would highly displease certain ecclesiastics, while the old-fashioned early Victorian, who complacently regarded a rapidly-increasing family and a rapidly-exhausted wife as the excellent work of a benevolent Creator, and the more modern Imperialist, who conceives it to be the duty of every Briton to populate the Empire with superfluous children, will fiercely denounce the epicurean Plantin.

Yet, for all that, it would seem as if the Plantin scheme of life were insidiously gaining ground in the growing generation. The birth-rate, as always seems to happen in really prosperous communities, continues not to rise in leaps and bounds, despite clerical precept and practice, and we are hearing on all sides of

garden suburbs. The smaller family has closer ties than what could hardly be called anything but a clan ; the children die less frequently in the more prosperous class, and prefer, if they can, to stay in their own country. When Taine visited England in the sixties, he was struck by the way in which families were large and dispersed all over the world, unlike the French family, which was small and clung to its own soil. We seem nowadays to be nearer the French ideal.

The fundamental and really important question behind all this is whether the change savours of national decline, or whether it means a saner and better scheme of life, and a preference of human prosperity to mere money-making.

Hitherto we have been an adventurous race. We have preferred making rapid fortunes by an adventurous career to a steady routine of industry. The unemployed, who in many cases refuse work and who leave the agricultural colonies provided for them by philanthropists because requested to wash their own linen, would probably accept with joy the prospect of a search for hidden treasure. A gentleman who recently appropriated some treasure-trove in Kensington, cheerfully admitted in court that he had not worked again till he had spent his money. The industrial Titans of the nineteenth century made money as quickly as possible in order to settle down as country gentlemen. The idea of work as one of the enjoyments of life is certainly alien to the Anglo-Saxon mind as we know it from

the times of Tacitus, and the industrial prosperity of the country seems to have been generally initiated and stimulated by alien elements—namely, Flemish and Celtic.

Our chief danger, therefore, seems to be that the loss of the spirit of adventure might involve a decline of national energy. The old English notion I take to have been this: "Produce energy by poverty. Primogeniture will endanger activity in the younger son; to educate, but not to make provision for, your children is the best means of inducing your daughters to marry and your sons to work. If there is no room in England for Englishmen, India and the Colonies remain. The world at large is waiting for the improving efforts of our race, and we are born to rule it if we only increase and multiply in sufficient numbers."

The Manchester School of course took the other side. "India is a terrible liability, and the Colonies will drop off when ripe. Have economy and prosperity at home and peace with the world. Our ideal should be cosmopolitan, and national differences should be merged in a general enthusiasm for trade."

The old Manchester School had its day, and died with Majuba and Khartoum. The pendulum swung, and we renewed our policy of adventure, which reached its culmination in the Jameson Raid. Finally, however, the Boer War sobered the adventurous. Fighting turned out to be hard and serious work instead of a splendid game; gold mines required the strenuous efforts of the Chinese to make them work. On the top of this

came the proposal of another adventure. Our Imperial existence was to depend on a fiscal union against all the world. Food would cost more, but somehow or other we were to have more money to spend, and that money was to come out of the foreigner's pocket. Rightly or wrongly, the country prefers its present ills to others it knows not of. I have even met some heretics who would prefer Chinese labour to the incessant blundering and inefficiency of the British workman, and would not greatly object to living on the income of foreign investments.

What is to be the future? It almost looks as if French notions might assert themselves. In the United States and some of our Colonies, where there is plenty of land, the population may or may not expand up to a stationary level of prosperity. But in England the aristocracy is generally content to live a country life, the over-taxed middle-classes will prefer to pay less to the revenue, and the British workman will continue to hope for a guaranteed wage irrespective of his activities. We may be content to see other countries wealthier than ourselves, provided that we have enough for our own needs. We may leave it to the Colonies to decide whether or not they agree with us in thinking that the Empire should be kept up, and if they do they will then perhaps contribute rateably to its maintenance. Like modern France, we may come to the conclusion that national and individual wellbeing and a proper distribution of wealth are better worth striving for than the ambition of incessantly

adding fresh territory and protectorates to the Empire. We may achieve as prosperous and splendid a record of human happiness as the Roman Empire did in its later days.

The last sentence bears its own warning. In the history of the world it seems as if a nation or an empire can never safely sit still. The propagation of large families, the struggle for wealth, and the thirst for adventure are after all only manifestations of the will to live. The Romans sat down to enjoy the fruits of their labours and conquests, and then little by little the alien was made to fight and work, and the Empire slowly decayed. The same fate may await us. But if, in the end, the British Empire shall lose its identity in the same sense that an individual dies, then in the same sense that the results of a man's career live on we shall have left a legacy to the world of justice and fair dealing between man and man which will endure as long as the great fabric of law and administrative order that has come down to modern Europe from Rome. And with that comforting reflection many will be content to enjoy the delights so eloquently enumerated by Plantin, and—

"Attendre chez soi bien doucement la mort."

Old Humphrey's Walks in London

THE other day I had been reading Leigh Hunt's gossipy book about London, when I suddenly noticed among my books 'Old Humphrey's Walks in London,' written, like the other work, somewhere about 1850. I had never looked at the little volume since it had been given to me as a boy on the death of an aunt. The book had been presented to my aunt in 1854.

The characteristic phraseology of a period is often better preserved by a popular, than by a distinguished, writer. Leigh Hunt would not, for example, have written, "St. Paul's, the most gigantic, the most elevated, the most celebrated, and by far the most conspicuous building in London, is a fit edifice to be visited by a perambulator." It takes a little time to realize that "perambulator" is here used to define not a machine but a pedestrian, just as it once needed a little reflection to understand a startling post-card from the above mentioned aunt. "Your old relation," she wrote from Brighton, "is not seriously indisposed but is temporarily suffering from the effects of walking improperly."

She only meant, of course, that she had been walking to an improper extent, but this was not obvious at the first reading.

"Old Humphrey" preserves not only the characteristic phraseology, but also the characteristic ideas, of his times. In this way he particularly entertains the modern reader who takes any historical interest in the ideas of the Victorian era. I make bold to say that Old Humphrey explains, as no one else can nowadays explain, exactly what inspired Matthew Arnold's indignation against the middle class and exactly how Ruskin came to write a book like 'Mornings in Florence'; while he also illuminates, by explicitly stating, a whole number of opinions and prejudices which linger in a dormant or moribund condition all over the country and crop up when least expected—principally, perhaps, in the silly season.

Old Humphrey has the merit of extreme honesty. There is no *mauvaise honte* in his composition. We positively warm to him when he writes in his preface: "If, however, my mourning has been great, my mercies have been greater; and seldom do I pass an hour of any day without a Halleluia on my lip or in my heart." We are delighted to be assured that "habitual cheerfulness is no unfit attendant on healthy piety," and to know that it has "not been inconsistent with my years and my hopes to give some account of such places of public interest in London as may be visited by Christian people in their hours of relaxation without hampering them in their earthly duties, or hindering them on their way to heaven."

Old Humphrey's piety has, if I may say so, a

good body to it, and it fits in very profitably with his pleasures. Thus he is genuinely fond of giving "copper coins" to the poor, but does not seem inclined to do much more for them. "What a comfortable thing it is," he writes, "that one can buy such a substantial gratification, as that of lighting up the eye, and gladdening the heart of the poor, at the low price of two-pence!" But the piety of the period was certainly robust enough to stand crucial tests. We are told of the terrible fire which destroyed the Grand Storehouse at the Tower. Our old friend then continues:—"I have just spoken to a pious lady residing on Tower Hill, who, when told, on the night of the fire, that the surrounding neighbourhood would be blown up by the gunpowder in the magazine, was enabled calmly to reply that such an event could not take place without God's permission, and again went to repose on her pillow." This naturally leads on to some apposite quotations in connection with the end of the world, and the "fervent heat" likely to supervene at such a time.

Old Humphrey's reflections are not, however, always so remote from mundane affairs. His conscience is considerably perturbed by a visit to the National Gallery.

"There are many splendid specimens of art," he writes, "magnificent triumphs of the pencil, in the gallery, to which, on account of the freedom exercised in their design and execution, particular allusion cannot be made. One of two things must be admitted, either that the general conception of modesty and propriety entertained by the Christian world is too strict, or that painters in

their principles and practice are too free. Without any affectation, I am quite inclined to think that the latter is the more just, and certainly the more safe, conclusion of the two. The morality of a painting reaches the judgment only by passing through the lengthy avenues of reason and reflection, while its immorality influences the passions instantaneously through the eye. Hardly can I persuade myself that my error is to be too precise and severe in judging of the thoughts, words, or deeds of my fellow men,"

and so forth.

After this it is not surprising to find that "the pencil of Hogarth, like that of many other painters, was not so chaste as a Christian spectator might desire," although "in a picture where the artist's object is a moral one, the very appearance of evil, if not necessary to point the moral, should be avoided," or to read, "So long as Music is content to be the handmaid of devotion she is well worthy of regard; but when she sets up herself to be worshipped, down with her, down with her, to the ground!"

Old Humphrey gets his chance, in Westminster Abbey, of giving some public and appropriate expression to his feelings.

"The conductor has hastened onwards," he tells us, "with a group of visitants, leaving me alone. I have written with my finger on the dust of a monarch's tomb, 'Sown in corruption.' This is a fit place for reflection. Here kings are crowned, and here they lie down in the grave, making corruption their father, and the worm their mother and sister, Job xvii. 14."

This paragraph somehow reproduces a vivid image of old Humphrey himself furtively inscrib-

ing his remark while no one is looking. I feel sure that he spoke very precisely, and with a particularly full and unctuous roll of syllables. It is gratifying to hear that he only used his finger and the dust for recording his reflections, for the reader has occasional misgivings that "Christian spectators" not infrequently used their pencils on public monuments.

We are pleasantly surprised, however, to find Old Humphrey not insensible to earthly dignities in the flesh. In the Thames Tunnel he is reminded of an illustrious personage.

"Years ago I was cooped up in this place with a princess; yes, Old Humphrey was standing on the same plank with the Grand Duchess Helene, sister to the emperor of all the Russias, who happened to visit the tunnel when he was here. Had she been a peasant instead of a princess, this record of the event had never been made. What trifling circumstances puff up the heart!"

Old Humphrey, as befits his generation, has a righteous horror of war except when pursued for righteous ends. In the Tower he notes—

"And now the implements of war, the instruments of destruction, thicken upon me. These are the prolific progeny of evil passions; the scorpion brood of sin. There is a party of visitors before me, and their admiration and praise are unbounded. One timid female alone has whispered the word 'dreadful!' . . . and dreadful they are." . . .

Here follows an enumeration of medieval weapons. On the other hand a grocer's shop suggests a different vein of reflection, which,

after a dissertation on black and green teas, continues:

"We are purblind beings at the best, and cannot fathom His almighty counsels, whose 'ways are not as our ways.' The tea trade, which we only regard as a source of luxury and temporal profit, may one day, by the Divine permission and blessing, be a battering-ram to knock down the wall of China, a key to unlock the hearts of the Chinese, and a channel through which a flood of gospel light may flow to illumine the three hundred millions of pagans which the 'celestial empire' contains."

It is, however, to be feared that the writer might not have been too fastidious in his choice of a battering-ram in pursuit of these laudable aims.

His horror of war slightly flavours his unfavourable impressions of the pensioners at Greenwich Hospital, "most of whom must be treading on the brink of an eternal world." He notes that "now and then a thumb-marked Bible was visible, but more frequently a jest-book and boasting ballad."

The "panoramas" of such places as "Mont Blanc," Lima, or Lago Maggiore, appear to have been a great feature of the time. We are conducted through all of them. At one point Old Humphrey finds that the exhibition he came to see has for some time been removed, and quite incorrigibly remarks, "These little disappointments are not without their advantages; they prepare, or at least ought to do so, our tempers for greater trials." But we are rewarded by discovering, instead of the exhibition, a model of

St. Peter's at Rome, which provokes the comment,

"Amid all the goodly glory of St. Peter's, I cannot but remember that it is one of the strongholds of Popery—a temple wherein the mummeries of the Romish religion are practised with a high hand. Would that a purer faith and simpler religious ceremonies prevailed within its decorated walls!"

"With a high hand" is certainly a splendid effort of rhetoric, but leaves rather a vague impression. A visit to Madame Tussaud's exhibition follows, which includes a colloquy with Madame Tussaud herself and at which Old Humphrey is mistaken for an effigy by some of the visitors.

A long chapter on the "Cemeteries of London" shows our friend quite at the zenith of his powers. His curiosity is always quite inexhaustible, especially where horrors are concerned. As he remarks, when strolling in Kensal Green, "A cemetery should soothe sorrow, as well as call forth profitable reflection. Judging by my present feelings, this place is calculated to do both." After visiting Old Brompton and Kensal Green he comes to Norwood and is quite fascinated by the family vaults.

"I have passed through the chapels and descended to the vaults below them—the silent receptacles of the dead. The chapels are plain, and in excellent keeping. Many would like some stained glass in the large window, and *I should have no objection to a little drapery round it, to increase the solemnity of the place;* but these things are not important and can be dispensed with."

The italics (needless to say) are not Old Humphrey's. I expect that he would have chosen festoons of a dark Indian red with a yellow fringe. But later on he makes an even more attractive discovery, namely, that coffins are lowered into some of the vaults by means of a piston working in water underneath the chapel. This invention is praised not only for its mechanical skill but also for its harrowing effect on mourners.

"While the mourners . . . are yet gazing, with eyes half-blinded with tears, on the coffin that contains the body of the departed, the elevated bier, or stand, on which it lies, begins slowly and noiselessly to sink, without any apparent agency. The astonished spectator can hardly believe his senses; yet lower and lower the coffin descends until it altogether disappears . . . I am told that at a funeral, a few days ago, in an assembly of at least a hundred persons, scarcely was a dry eye seen in the chapel."

Old Humphrey's delight in the success of this ingenious device is perhaps symptomatic of the delight in machinery for its own sake felt by his contemporaries. As it seems to me, his book is curiously typical throughout of the men who, in the hackneyed phrase, "have made England what she is." He has the great quality, which Goethe so highly valued in young Englishmen, of daring to be himself. In all his pharisaical and sanctimonious vulgarity he is quite as sublimely naked and unashamed as he is benevolent and courageous on the better side of him.

I have never been able to discover his identity,* but I have no doubt that he was an honest citizen with a large family, who, after "relishing his broiled ham or bacon" in the morning and reading and descanting on the Holy Scriptures, sallied forth to do excellent work, and fulfilled all his obligations with unsparing zeal. His walks in London display an encyclopædic knowledge of all sorts of subjects whenever it is allowed to emerge through the continuous mass of platitudes and moralities. If he hurls texts at the publican and sinner, he at least throws "copper coins" to the poor. His little book is, at any rate, an admirable collection of materials for what the Germans call the "culture-historian" of the nineteenth century in England.

* Mr. Elkin Mathews informs me that his real name was George Mogridge (1787–1854), and that he is buried at Hastings. I am also indebted to Miss Lucy Deykin for similar information, and she mentions that Mrs. Mogridge died in 1871 and is buried in the churchyard of Harborne Parish Church, near Birmingham. It seems a pity that neither of them (*i.e.* Mr. and Mrs. Mogridge) should have enjoyed the posthumous ecstasy of being lowered into a vault "by means of a piston working in water."

The "First Gaudy"

IN my undergraduate days I had always imagined that my first "gaudy" would be a series of disillusions. I had pictured all my friends, acquaintances,and enemies transformed into a monotonous assembly of bald, fat, middle-aged mediocrities with nothing whatever to say to each other. My vision had indeed closely resembled the ordinary conception of heaven, where everyone is uninteresting, respectable, and thoroughly bored. It was therefore with a feeling of painful curiosity that I attended the ceremony. I do not know—and modesty forbids me to speculate—if my experience of the next world will in any way reproduce my memories of the gaudy, but it was a curious anti-climax. The extraordinary feature of the scene was that everyone remained the same. Physically there had been some change. My contemporaries were balder and had streaks of grey in the hair, but they did not seem fatter, though personally I became conscious of an increased girth. And in themselves they remained exactly as I had known them. Many had become members of the genial club in which our legislation is conceived by publicists to take place. Those who had been self-important as

undergraduates were no less self-important now, but for the most part they were quite as cheerfully giddy and irresponsible under the burden of empire as they had been in youth, and seemed considerably more at leisure. Constituencies appeared to be even less difficult to please and amuse than university examiners, and there were no lectures to attend or text-books to cram. Members of the mercantile and professional classes were perhaps a little less buoyant, but, meeting on common ground, all had the air of having just returned from an unduly prolonged vacation.

This was especially marked in the groups that spontaneously formed themselves. The old little sets and cliques sprang up again in a moment just as they had before, except that everyone tried to assume an air of universal benevolence. At what point the naturally gregarious instinct of mankind merges into snobbery is always difficult to gauge, but the general instinct of human beings always lies in the direction of desiring to appear in the group which for one reason or another is held to be most respectable, whether the society is that of the Antipodes, England, the Continent or the backwoods. The degree of sacrifice that is made to the instinct depends wholly on the individual, but where the craving is at all strong, difficulties will always result from those changes of environment that occur, at any rate in early life.

An intimacy with Smith major, the captain of the school eleven, may be highly desirable at

school, but may not possess the same value at a university, where Smith's capacities may fade by the side of greater prowess. A close friendship with Jones, who moves in the most approved set of the college, may not have the same value in London, where Jones may turn out to be quite poor and obscure. And nothing is more deceptive than the society of a university, in which forecasts of success and failure seem oftener than elsewhere to miscarry. The most brilliant scholar of the year may be languishing in a home for inebriates or a lunatic asylum, and the most gilded youth may be wandering about in search of credit as an undischarged bankrupt. Such contrasts are particularly puzzling for a certain type of don. Thackeray's sketch of the old-fashioned don in his 'Book of Snobs' is a little out of date now. Dons are not so simple-minded as all that; and, to tell the truth, represent, on the whole, a shrewder, more sensible, and finer type of man than one ordinarily meets in the world, though they suffer much from the incessant contact with immature minds and from the lack of personal responsibility for their blunders. Still, in these respects they are at no greater disadvantage than Cabinet ministers. But there is a certain type of don—generally young and clerical—of an inferior mould. He devotes an unduly large part of his time to cultivating the more influential section of the undergraduate world, and is respected by his kind in proportion as he has succeeded in frequenting the society of the athlete and of the person who is vulgarly

known as the "blood." Perhaps the memory of discovering queer specimens of live pigs, poultry, or shellfish in his bed inspires him, in sheer self-defence, to propitiate the bolder spirits of his college; perhaps he only suffers from a laudable anxiety to propagate his ethical or religious ideals by imparting them to the most respected members of the community.

At any rate the gaudy is an embarrassing occasion for him. Some few other alliances may have sprung up among those whom he considered quite separated, or an increased knowledge of the world may have made his old friends less receptive of his ideas. He may, however, always console himself with the reflection that nobody will have the time or inclination to indulge in such overt expressions of disapproval as those to which I have before alluded. And after all he cannot spoil the real sodality of the occasion. It is greater, as a rule, than that of an old school-fellows' gathering. There is a type of man whose friendships, or what are termed such, depend wholly on the proximity of accident—the arrangement of a table for meals or the constitution of a football team and college boat. Such a man will, in after life, not seek for society outside that of his colleagues, his neighbours, or relations. To him a university means little, but to those who are really capable of friendship, Oxford or Cambridge brings the chance of finding truly congenial spirits and the time for appreciating them outside the more fixed routine of school, where one is generally bound to sit next the

same person at meals or at work. And, at Oxford or Cambridge, as opposed to later life, friends can meet without the ordeal of preliminary correspondence and telegrams or of introducing each other's wives.

This is the great contribution of our universities to English life, where the relations of human beings are often so much stiffer and less adaptable than elsewhere. It is impossible to cultivate the society of one's friends at big receptions or at dinner-parties, where general conversation is impossible, and where the exacting duty of talking to one woman, or at most two, is substituted for the delights of a general conversation. It is almost equally difficult to feel "unbuttoned" at clubs which tend more and more to resemble big hotels. Our gaudy at least recalls us to the memory of a better state of being, and may even console us for the intellectual handicaps of a university education.

The Commercial Spirit

OUR ancestors frequently affected to despise commerce and things commercial, though they did not disdain to profit by its advantages. There was something low about trade in general and traders in particular. Probably they did not love Napoleon the more for calling them "a nation of shopkeepers." A professional man, such as a doctor, lawyer, or surveyor, was a little better than a tradesman, but then he laboured under the stigma of earning a livelihood; he neither enjoyed the feudal distinction of owning land or fighting, nor the traditional prestige that a clergyman might derive from carrying a bishop's crozier in his carpet bag.

About the middle of the nineteenth century the climate of opinion slightly changed. The Reform Bill and the industrial revolution gave the middle classes more scope and prestige. Physical science was applied to the production of wealth and ultimately gave rise to the growth of enormous fortunes. Public opinion unbent a little, "broad-minded" people began to admit that a successful manufacturer should be respected for his success, and it became less discreditable to work for a living. To an enlightened nobility a rising

doctor or lawyer came to appear a little less like a monkey climbing up a stick than he did before. Even the trader, pure and simple, was regarded as contributing in his humble fashion to the prosperity of the country, though the actor, musician, and journalist still remained outside the pale.

Meanwhile, even larger fortunes were being made in the United States, and as time went on, these fortunes dowered the nobility, and enriched the hotel-keepers, of Europe. The latter phenomenon has made living up to the American standard on the Continent as difficult as it is to evade copious draughts of iced water in what used to be comfortable and unpretentious hotels. It is a well-known commonplace in economics that supply creates demand. Hence, modern plutocracy also began to introduce a number of new demands on the purse. Motor-cars, week-ends, dinners at fashionable restaurants, and a number of other indispensable requirements all involved having more money. Persons hitherto classed as rich now had to wake up. Directorships inaugurated, and the receipt of various commissions cemented, the association of the gentry with trade. The foundation of half-penny newspapers not only swelled the new aristocracy but also provided a certain amount of casual labour for some of the old brigade.

The ancient prejudice against trade involved the erroneous belief that traders must necessarily be dishonest, and the modern tolerance of trade seems to be tainted with the same fallacy. It is

becoming sufficient, in these days, to cover a palpable fraud by saying "business is business," and this is largely due to the extraordinary notion that commerce is necessarily dishonest. All bargaining has certain rules. A and B are assumed to conceal from each other the degree of desire that each feels to buy or sell respectively, but this involves no kind of fraud. Subject to this reservation, to give a misdescription or a false warranty is, of course, fraudulent. The occasional success of these latter tactics impresses the half-educated person with the conviction either that all business is cheating or that the man who cheats is cleverer than the man who is cheated. It therefore frequently happens that the half-educated person who loses his prejudice against trade, also loses his prejudice against cheating, and, in fact, associates it with superior talent. Hence the word "commercial" oftener than not connotes the half-educated notion of sharp practice in all its forms. Yet to buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest is perfectly honest, and it is not equivalent either to buying at an unfair price and selling at an unfair price, or to sweating employees and overcharging customers.

This tendency to admire sharp practice has naturally grown with the corresponding multiplication of the half-educated classes who have acquired an insidious influence by sheer force of numbers. The enterprising politician or newspaper proprietor cannot afford to ignore them, and frequently panders to them. It

sometimes looks as if public opinion, in so far as the phrase covers effectual public opinion, might in the end become the epitome of all that is cheap and nasty, and nothing can be cheaper and nastier than the notion that petty but law-abiding dishonesty or meanness constitutes the indispensable equipment for what is vulgarly known as success.

In these circumstances, it is not surprising if our society is, in many essential respects, less healthy and stable than it was forty or fifty years or so ago, and especially in regard to money-making. Upper class privileges may then have been often abused, but, on the whole, personal honour stood for more, and wealth stood for less, than each respectively stands now. Money was made more slowly, but it was spent more rationally, and there was considerably less anxiety to escape all those tiresome obligations that are so conveniently summarised in what used to be known as the "gentleman's psalm." In other words, business engagements were better kept, and bills of all sorts were paid without chronic haggling or evasion. Gentlemen did not use their social advantages to tout for tradesmen or to earn commissions in the City. Ladies did not so inveterately gamble on the Stock Exchange. Emancipation from irrational prejudices against commerce may be desirable, but freedom from so-called commercial prejudices is equally desirable. In the United States, for example, where thought is no less precipitate than every other form of human activity, there appears to

be a distinct prejudice, among high financiers, in favour of making money by any means ready to hand. To cheat one's partner, to deceive the public, to monopolise a staple article of food, are triumphs of ingenuity not unknown to some American captains of industry. In Great Britain, the tendency is, perhaps, more negative, and oftener takes the form of an automatic impulse, quite common among the half-educated, to avoid payment whenever possible. To make gratuitous use of charitable institutions like hospitals, to telephone or write a letter to a doctor in order to avoid paying for a consultation, to induce a country solicitor to undersell his local colleagues, and generally to avoid payment in any circumstances where it is unlikely to be enforced, are accomplishments probably commoner and more avowed than they used to be, both among the rich and the poor.

I once knew a consumptive doctor who practically killed himself by devotion to his patients, and whose death was undoubtedly due to going out on a terribly cold night to look after an urgent case. He died leaving a widow and child with nothing more than the proceeds of a small practice, and an insurance policy for £1000. A bare request to his patients, who were made fully aware of these facts, was of little use, and nothing but repeated threats of county court proceedings, followed by the issuing of summonses, availed in the great majority of cases to obtain payment of the fees which he had actually earned by severe self-sacrifice during

his life. It is edifying to speculate on the virtuous indignation that these defaulters would have displayed to a person who had been found out cheating at cards, or who had served a short term of imprisonment.

The fallacies of the "commercial" mind are, like most other fallacies, merely due to mental indolence and stupidity. As Mr. Chesterton has remarked, worldly success can only be achieved either by doing very good work or by cheating. Observing certain hypocrisies or precautions, it is, of course, much easier to cheat than to work well. It is at first sight easier for a tradesman to obtain custom by paying secret commissions, or employing pretentiously dressed touts, than to supply really good commodities, or for a certain type of publisher to succeed by overpaying writers with well-known names, and underpaying everyone else.

Conversely, the gospel of cheapness involves the fallacy of supposing that advice on questions relating to a man's health or property can be obtained by the same sort of economic process that lowers the price of provisions to an irreducible *minimum*. This common delusion merely raises the rates of mortality and enriches lawyers.

The really interesting question is whether it pays in the long run to do bad work. The above-mentioned devices may be invented by fools for fools, but may it not be argued that they will successfully hoodwink the majority of mankind? Is the average man really capable

of distinguishing between good advice and bad advice, good work and bad work, good food and bad food? The "commercial" assumption appears to be in the negative. Yet in a society less pre-occupied in money-making than anxious to lead and enjoy a really good life, there is no reason why this should be the case. Bad advice from a doctor or lawyer soon makes its consequences felt. Bad plumbing must be discovered sooner or later—sometimes too late—though the same remark probably does not apply to moderately adulterated food.

Yet although honesty may be the best policy for a fairly prosperous person in an old country, it is not necessarily so in a new country where fortunes are rapidly accumulated. Under such conditions, a man may have made money enough to retire from business before being detected, especially when everyone else is making, or trying to make, money by the same methods of overcharging and underpaying whenever possible.

Our society has not, however, come to this pass, and one would fain hope that the substantial expediency of clean business methods may, one day, appeal to modern England more than it does now. Early Victorian honesty bore good fruit in its day. Ruskin was proud to describe his father as an "entirely honest merchant," a person more respected in those days than a smart commission agent.

The modern imbecilities of the so-called commercial spirit will not be cured, indeed they will probably be aggravated, by State interference.

The recent statute against secret commissions is never likely to be exercised against any very important or conspicuous offender. No prosecution under the Act can take place without the permission of the Attorney-General, and it may be remembered that the prosecution of Whitaker Wright had to be conducted by private enterprise. Probably, too, Whitaker Wright considered that he was playing quite fairly. His methods were, after all, largely trans-Atlantic, and he had spent much of his life in the United States. Legislation may sometimes have humanitarian results and make men less cruel by forcibly stirring up a torpid benevolence, but it is proverbially impossible to make men honest by Act of Parliament. The only remedy for the recent symptoms of blind money-grabbing I have described is to convince people that it is really cleverer, as well as more profitable, to "do very good work" instead of cheating.

It has been sardonically remarked that modern democracy will make a very pleasant environment to live in a thousand years hence. Meanwhile the necessary state of transition has its disadvantages. We seem to be reaching a state of opinion in which everyone is to have rights without duties. Big fortunes are to be abolished, but otherwise everyone is to receive a decent allowance of unearned increment from promiscuous confiscation. Dangerous criminals are to be treated with a leniency which may soon lead to the revival of lynch law, as in France and the United States. Everyone is, in short, to be

entitled to complain of the State if his life does not happen to be all beer and skittles. Such ideas naturally induce a state of mind in which the average citizen will desire to shirk work and get everything for nothing. Fortunately the disease must achieve its own remedy, but remedies are either preventive or heroic. One of the best preventives might be the public restoration of honest dealing to its proper place among the virtues.

Pseudo-Intellectuals

AN elderly and cultured spinster was taken not long ago to see a pretty little flamboyant church in France. Amid the unsophisticated pleasure of the rest of the party she remained cold and aloof. On her opinion being invited she looked slightly affronted, and icily remarked "Rather late Gothic, I think."

Similar anecdotes could easily be collected by any tourist who attentively listened on his travels to the conversation round him. Italian picture galleries are full of didactic females who read aloud to their companions long passages of Ruskin, and merely look at the pictures in order to identify them with those mentioned in the sacred text. Their pleasure in what they see, or think they see, appears to be more ethical than æsthetic or intellectual. After a "Morning in Florence" laboriously spent in assimilating Ruskin at his best little Bethel period they can digest their midday meal with a feeling of duty done. They have got to know how wicked and decadent the Renaissance was, they have discerned the anecdotic "values" of Giotto, and have probably discovered new incentives to virtue in Byzantine Madonnas almost as angular as themselves.

The pastime is undoubtedly edifying, but, as a matter of idle curiosity, it is difficult to understand where the elements of pleasure or recreation come in. The energies devoted to parochial philanthropy, the decoration of churches, or the moral improvement of the poor might surely be renovated by some less strenuous occupation. The "movement," which is only a growth of the last twenty or thirty years, is however, an interesting phenomenon and affords a high testimony to those sterling qualities which have made England what she is.

> "Not once or twice in our rough island story
> The path of duty was the way to glory."

In this case it is to be hoped that it is not also the way to boredom.

It would be ungallant to speak as if this class were purely feminine. It includes also a large number of young gentlemen either engaged in academic pursuits or possessing a moderate independence, but endowed with all the meritorious attributes which we commonly associate with the British spinster as seen on the continent.

It would also be unfair—nay cruel—to suggest that these laudable pursuits are a waste of time. That the names of Giotto and Botticelli should be known at all to the middle classes of this country is no doubt a gain, even if the names convey no more than a sense of moral exhilaration, and other painters not mentioned by Ruskin are neglected. But the same sort of thing may in other directions mean waste not only of time but of money.

To the wealthy unemployed the moral outlets that existed for their energies a generation ago now seem tame and unsatisfying. Mere ordinary philanthropy tends to be discarded for the "higher sewage" or "imperial schemes." Among others the clergy feel that they have to live up to the requirements of an enlightened age. "Many a worthy clergyman," wrote Mr. Oscar Wilde, "who passes his life in admirable works of kindly charity, lives and dies unknown; but it is sufficient for some shallow uneducated passman out of either university to get up in his pulpit and express his doubts about Noah's ark or Balaam's ass or Jonah and the whale for half of London . . . to sit open-mouthed in rapt admiration at his superb intellect."

The British workman is also beginning to cultivate his mind, or rather to have it cultivated for him by unwilling but submissive ratepayers. The writer once knew of an institution that caught clerks and artizans quite young, and, in many cases, against the wishes of their parents and employers. Their enthusiasm was noble, but sadly unpractical, for it made them completely indifferent to any ideas of earning a livelihood. Nor did they seem to assimilate knowledge except as an adjunct to certain fixed ideas. In the middle of a lecture on the Reformation in England they would ask the lecturer what he thought about "payment of members." The same sort of phenomena is sometimes observed in the British workman's female relations at "Extension Lectures." Both sexes at any

rate seem to agree in postponing the practical business of life to this somewhat unmethodical kind of speculation, and the tendency is a little unfortunate, because the wealthy unemployed can at least pay to get the practical business of their lives transacted for them, whereas the poor cannot.

"Intellectuals" was a term used at one time in France to define persons who either could not or would not understand common people or ideas. "Pseudo-intellectuals" is an expression which may fitly describe persons who do not really comprehend either the world or the things of the mind. In England we have two classes of "pseudo-intellectuals." There is the so-called man of affairs, e.g. the Labour Member, who would do better to improve his study of economics instead of soaring into the empyrean of sociology. There is, on the other hand, the academic and leisured person who, unsatisfied with his own pursuits, seeks to "know life," and in time derives a precarious acquaintance with it from the works of Ibsen or Mr. Bernard Shaw. In the abstract nothing can be more desirable than that the practical man should be able to recreate his mind with books or that the college don should learn how to balance accounts. But in the restlessness of our age there seems a tendency for people to neglect their business, and this may have unfortunate results even in the present—not to mention the future. The long-suffering householder may not be consoled for an attack of diphtheria by the knowledge that the plumber's man reads *6d.* editions of

Haeckel in the evening, and the student's thirst for exact thinking will not be slaked by the college don's impressions of the populace at San Gimignano sandwiched into a discussion on the freedom of the will.

Our modern zeal for intellect really goes too far. A deserving clerk in the Civil Service was not long ago relieved from his duties and given a competence to enable him to write treatises, the style of which shows that he could have written even better Finance Acts—statutes which seem to be designed by a benevolent government to compensate lawyers for the loss of their conveyancing business. This experiment seems to have worked very well, but the writer can never forget a certain hotel porter who, in his leisure moments, read Shakespeare's sonnets, and evolved a new theory about them. Some kind person gave him enough money to read up the subject at the British Museum, and the delighted porter wrote and published a treatise on the subject. By the time the copies were printed he was, in an almost starving condition, taking them round and trying to sell them to the world at large. But for a timely act of benevolence on the part of a generous man, now dead, he would certainly have committed suicide out of sheer chagrin and destitution. This happens to be a true story, but it has certain merits as a parable. It illustrates, among other things, the advantages of technical education, the proper uses of benevolence, and the dangers of the higher criticism.

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